

APRIL 6, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY: BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S MISSTATEMENT OF THE DAY -
INTELLIGENCE DATA PRIOR
TO 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued today's "Bush Administration's Misstatement of the Day" on intelligence data prior to 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Speaking to members of the media about the intelligence information available to him and members of his national security team before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Bush said:

"... If we'd have known that the enemy was going to fly airplanes into our buildings, we would have done everything in our power to stop it." ([Chicago Sun-Times, 4/6/04](#)) President Bush has made

[similar statements in the past](#)

. However, according to an April 2, 2004 analysis by the Center for American Progress (see below), denials by President Bush and members of his national security team that they had no prior knowledge that Al Qaeda was planning an attack involving airplanes *"believe the record."*

1999 -EXPLICIT WARNING THAT AL QAEDA HAD PLANS TO FLY AIRPLANES INTO BUILDINGS: A 1999 report prepared by the Library of Congress for the National Intelligence Council "warned that Osama bin Laden's terrorists could hijack an airliner and fly it into government buildings like the Pentagon." The report specifically said, "Suicide bomber(s) belonging to al-Qaida's Martyrdom Battalion could crash-land an aircraft packed with high explosives into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the CIA, or the White House." In response to the ominous warnings, the New York Times reports "under Janet Reno, the Justice Department's counterterrorism budget increased 13.6% in the fiscal year 1999, 7.1% in 2000 and 22.7% in 2001." [Source: [CBS, 5/17/02](#) ; [NY Times, 2/28/02](#)

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EARLY 2001 - MAJOR SURGE IN AL QAEDA ACTIVITY: "In late spring 2001, a sudden surge in activity began among known Al Qaeda operatives. a reporter from Middle East Broadcasting visited bin Laden at a camp in Afghanistan and noted that his supporters were preparing for attacks against American 'interests.'" [Source: The Age of Sacred Terror, 2003]

EARLY 2001 - WHITE HOUSE DEPARTS FROM EFFORTS TO TRACK TERRORIST MONEY: The new Bush Treasury Department "disapproved of the Clinton Administration's approach to money laundering issues, which had been an important part of the drive to cut off the money flow to bin Laden." Specifically, the Bush Administration opposed Clinton Administration-backed efforts by the G-7 and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that targeted countries with "loose banking regulations" being abused by terrorist financiers. Meanwhile, the Bush Administration provided "no funding for the new National Terrorist Asset Tracking Center." [Source: The Age of Sacred Terror, 2003]

JULY 2001 - ANOTHER WARNING THAT AL QAEDA PLANNED TO USE PLANES AS MISSILES: The LA Times reported that U.S. and Italian officials were warned in July 2001 that "Islamic terrorists might attempt to kill President Bush and other leaders by crashing an airliner into the Genoa summit of industrialized nations." [Source: [LA Times, 9/27/01](#)]

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JULY 2001 - ASHCROFT STOPS FLYING COMMERCIAL BECAUSE OF "THREAT ASSESSMENT": Attorney General John Ashcroft stopped flying commercial airlines and instead began "traveling exclusively by leased jet aircraft instead of commercial airlines" because of "what the Justice Department called a 'threat assessment.'" That "threat assessment" has never been made public. [Source: [CBS, 7/26/01](#)]

AUGUST 2001 - PRESIDENT PERSONALLY WARNED OF AL QAEDA AIRPLANE PLOT: ABC News reported, Bush Administration "officials acknowledged that U.S. intelligence officials informed President Bush weeks before the Sept. 11 attacks that bin Laden's terrorist network might try to hijack American planes." Dateline NBC reported that on August 6, 2001, the President personally "received a one-and-a-half page briefing advising him that Osama bin Laden was capable of a major strike against the US, and that the plot could include the hijacking of an American airplane." [Source: [ABC News, 5/16/02](#) ;
NBC, 9/10/02]

SEPTEMBER 2001 - PENTAGON OFFICIALS CHANGE FLIGHTS ON 9/11 BECAUSE OF SECURITY: Newsweek reported that on 9/10/01 "a group of top Pentagon officials suddenly canceled travel plans for the next morning, apparently because of security concerns." Newsweek also reported "that as many as 10 to 12 warnings" were issued before 9/11, and "more than two of the warnings specifically mentioned the possibility of

hijackings." [Source: Newsweek, 9/24/01]